



PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES A FUTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY IN MIND

THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON works diligently to create an even more sustainable future for generations to come. What exactly does this mean? Sustainability is not about being static, but moving forward in ways that will increase opportunities for residents. To do that, Bloomington needs to continue to renew itself in every area. These ongoing City efforts are just a few examples of how we are preserving and protecting our natural resources toward an even more sustainable future. For more information, visit the City's website, www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: Sustainability.

"With the energy-efficient improvements, we are able to keep our energy costs down. In turn we can keep our ice rental fees down, making programs more affordable."

*Bloomington Ice Garden Manager
Andy Baltgalvis*



BETTER THAN REGULAR PAVEMENT

ANEW PERMEABLE asphalt parking lot and rain gardens were installed at Harrison Park, 1701 West 100th Street, to reduce runoff into Nine Mile Creek. The asphalt differed from the standard variety – it contained very little of the fine aggregate that normally creates a dense, impervious pavement.

The porous asphalt and rock base soaks up storm water and minimizes runoff that pollutes nearby Nine Mile Creek, reducing annual runoff by 90 percent.

"Initial monitoring of the area shows that the pavement is able to absorb at least 2.5 inches of rain water,"

reports Senior Engineering Technician Steve Segar.

Two rain gardens, one by the center parking median and one just off the entrance to Nine Mile Creek Trail, were also installed to collect runoff. In winter, no sand or salt are required. A plow removes excess snow; the remaining snow melts into the pavement.

Additional park sites in the city are being reviewed to receive the same treatment.

"This is just one example of how Public Works is becoming more innovative and sustainable in its practices."

*Public Works Project Coordinator
Jean Buckley*



BIG IMPROVEMENTS EQUAL BIG SAVINGS

BLOOMINGTON ICE GARDEN'S (BIG) rink number one underwent a major renovation in 2007 - 2008 that is proving to be a BIG energy saver. The 37-year-old rink, which seats 1,800 people, has seen a lot of use since it opened more than four decades ago. The rink reconstruction included new concrete flooring, an energy-efficient refrigeration system, extended players' boxes and glass that enhances spectator viewing. The renovation replaces a failing, less-efficient cooling system with an efficient, multiuse floor. In addition, hot gas is recovered from the compressors and used to heat the building and sub-floor to keep frost from penetrating the ground. High-output fluorescent fixtures were installed in all three rinks, replacing the existing fixtures. The new fixtures deliver the same light output for about 50 percent of the power. Motion sensors were also installed in all bathrooms and locker rooms.

ADVANCES IN SNOW PLOWING AND REMOVAL

IN 2007, BLOOMINGTON RECEIVED nearly 36 inches of snow, compared with 45 inches of snow in 2008. Practicing better methods of safe, efficient snow and ice control, Street Maintenance experimented with melting agents other than the traditional salt and sand mix in 2008 and 2009.

"The goal is to have the best snow removal program in the state," Assistant

Maintenance Superintendent Jim Eiler said. "To accomplish this, we've been researching different snow removal materials and chemical applications."

Using melting agents exclusively provides better traction and makes snow and ice easier to remove. This method reduces the amount of sand applied to streets that must be swept in the spring to prevent runoff from reaching our ponds and wetlands. In winter 2007 - 2008, Street Maintenance used only 2,000 tons of sand, compared to 7,000 tons in

years past. Street Maintenance also began an "anti-ice" approach by applying liquid salt brine to roads before a snowstorm to prevent snow and ice from bonding to the pavement. New plow routes increased the efficiency and quality of snow plowing. Main arterial roads are now plowed by two trucks in tandem. In addition, treating salt with brown and green coloring has helped plow drivers see how much is actually being applied, so that the least amount necessary is used, saving time and money.



"We've lived in Bloomington for more than 20 years and over the past few winters we've noticed a steady improvement in snow plowing. Thanks for the wonderful service."

Bloomington residents Rich Kessler and Marian Eisner

MOVING TOWARD A PAPERLESS FUTURE

THE CITY IS CONSTANTLY SEARCHING for new, more sustainable ways to communicate using the latest technology. In 2008, the City of Bloomington launched *Ask the City*, an online customer service system that provides residents an easy way to ask a question, report a complaint and get a resolution quickly. *Ask the City* has answered nearly 3,000 questions and

service requests since its inception and today boasts 2,700 users. In addition, more than 122 question-and-answer pages were browsed daily.

In March 2009, the City launched an e-mail subscription service called *E-Subscribe* that allows residents to sign up to receive important City news. Residents will also be able to receive

emergency alerts via text messages and e-mail.

As user-friendly technology evolves and becomes more prevalent, the City will continue to look for ways to enhance communication with residents, visitors and staff. These tools are more than just an information exchange; they are moving the City toward its goal to become even more sustainable.

To access these services and more, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.

"We're really looking forward to using E-Subscribe. If a game gets 'rained out,' we'll be able to send an e-mail alert to our subscribers."

Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager Greg Boatman

Sustainable Spotlight

The City requires all retailers selling fertilizer to offer **PHOSPHORUS-FREE** products and encourages residents to use these more environmentally friendly products. How can you tell if fertilizer has no phosphorus? The middle number on the bag should be zero.



SUSTAINABLE



2,700

Users on *ASK THE CITY*, the City's online service request and answers program.



400

Ponds and wetlands in Bloomington that FILTER STORMWATER RUNOFF.



2

Number of HYBRID VEHICLES used by the City.